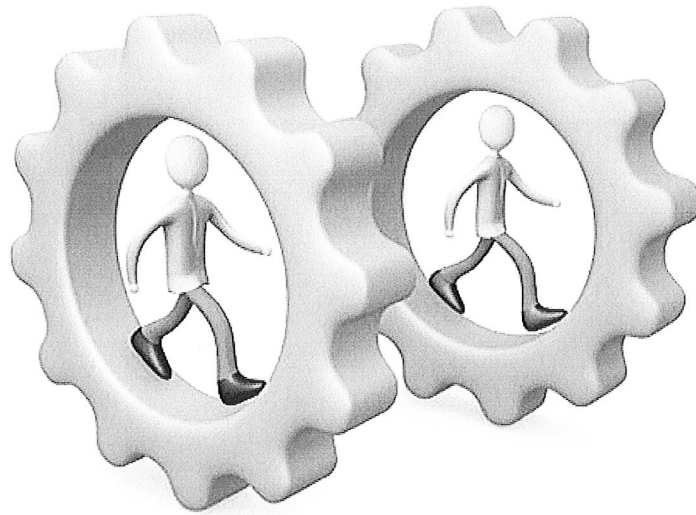


**NORTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (NCWRPC)
COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**



2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2018 Annual Performance Report

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The NCWRPC's ten county region is designated as an Economic Development District (EDD) by the U. S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA). Although Portage and Wood Counties are included in some sections of the Report they do not actively participate in neither the Economic Development District nor the NCWRPC.

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I. Introduction

The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC) is a voluntary association of governments, created in 1973 under Wisconsin State Statute 66.945, now 66.0309. Currently, the Commission serves the Counties of Adams, Forest, Juneau, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida, Portage, Vilas and Wood. This area received designation as an Economic Development District (EDD) in 1980.

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Annual Performance Report was reviewed and adopted by the Full Commission of the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (NCWRPC). This Performance Report provides an update on the activities of the NCWRPC related to the 2017 CEDS.

In the coming years the CEDS will be updated. As part of the update process a CEDS Committee will be organized to oversee the effort. The committee will include local elected officials, economic development groups, workforce groups and others. In addition, three area advisory organizations will provide review and input into the CEDS process as well. These are Centergy, which represents five counties in the central and southern area of the region, Grow North, which represents five northern counties in the region, and the North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board, which is the area workforce agency.

II. Past Year's Activities

The following provides a brief listing of economic development activities conducted by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. Assistance is provided at both the regional and local levels.

The CEDS will be revised annually and updated every five years. The CEDS will be revised annually using the most current demographic and economic data available with oversight provided by a CEDS Committee. The strategy becomes the foundation for all other economic development efforts of the NCWRPC.

Partner with other regional organizations: Partners include the two regional marketing groups in the region (Centergy & Grow North) and the North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board, among others. Dedicate staff assistance to these economic development groups, and promote additional cooperation and cooperation within the region.

Promote Livable and Sustainable Development: Bring the principles of livability and sustainability into the planning discussion in the region.

Regional Data & Mapping Center: Maintain clearinghouse of data by continuing to assemble and array various data relating to economic development, e.g. employment and unemployment statistics, population estimates, income levels, etc. Also maintain a regional mapping database.

Training and Education: Maintain staff expertise by attending EDA conferences, national and state level economic development and planning conferences, as well as workshops and other training opportunities.

Access to Capital: Work to secure financing for local businesses and work with local communities to secure funding for projects. NCWRPC will work with area business to secure funding through the North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation (NCWDC), the Central Wisconsin Economic Development (CWED) Corporation, and others. The NCWRPC will also provide oversight to the NCWDC.

Regional Assistance:

- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Updated
- Updated County Profiles graphically display economic data, including an inventory of business and industrial parks.
- Provided assistance to area economic development organizations at the regional level.
- Prepared Quarterly Economic Development Reports for each county and the region.
- Assemble and arrange various data relating to economic development, e.g., employment and unemployment statistics, sales tax receipts, population estimates, income levels, etc.
- Maintain Census Data, Socioeconomic Information and Planning Library. Staff also provides special Census and EMSI reports on request.
- North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation (NCWDC) assistance.
- Provided various support to the North Central Wisconsin Development Corporation (NCWDC) and Central Wisconsin Economic Development (CWED). These organizations are responsible for managing revolving loan funds. These funds assist local business expand and create jobs throughout the region. Many in EDA funded business parks.

Local Assistance:

Provide Local Assistance: Provide direct assistance to local units of government, businesses and other groups involved in economic development. Assistance is made available through providing data, developing plans, preparing grant applications, or providing staff assistance. Also provide assistance to updates of local comprehensive plans, in particular the economic development sections.

Maintain detailed Economic Development Profiles for each county in the region. Economic data would be collected and analyzed, maps prepared, and economic development profiles would be designed. These would be prepared in both print and digital format, and used to market the area to prospective businesses.

Continue to provide assistance to local communities, as needed, with the state's Sites & Buildings Program. On request provide assistance to communities to maintain accurate sites and building information of the State's primary economic development sites.

Foster Communication and Coordination: Promote the recommendations of the CEDS, maintain liaisons with federal, state, regional and local government agencies, disseminate current information about economic development and financial assistance programs and coordinate and evaluate economic development efforts in the region. Attending various committees and organizations throughout the region fosters these objectives.

Staff will continue to work with various organizations throughout the region, such as Workforce Development, Wisconsin Economic Development Association (WEDA), Centergy, Grow North, Member County Economic Development Corporations, and the Wausau Business Incubator Board, among others.

Support Local Efforts: Support the efforts of and collaborate with Workforce Development Boards, Technical Colleges, Colleges and Universities, and Regional Economic Development Organizations.

Support Infrastructure Efforts: Support businesses and communities applying for funding for new and improved infrastructure, as well as technology upgrades, such as broad band.

Work to incorporate economic development principles and implement CEDS strategy into local plans, particularly economic development chapters of comprehensive plans.

Provide Local Planning Assistance: Continue to assist local communities in developing and updating Comprehensive Plans. Assist local comprehensive planning efforts develop economic

development sections in their plans that relate and are compatible with the CEDS. Also assist in the development of detail economic plans, such as downtown plans, redevelopment strategies, and financial plans.

Grant Application Assistance: Continue to assist area businesses, local governments and development corporations in preparing state and federal economic development matching grant applications for local projects. Prepare Economic Development Administration (EDA), Wisconsin Department of Administration, and USDA's Rural Development applications, among others for additional economic development funding for active district members and NCWRPC sponsored projects.

Local Assistance Summary:

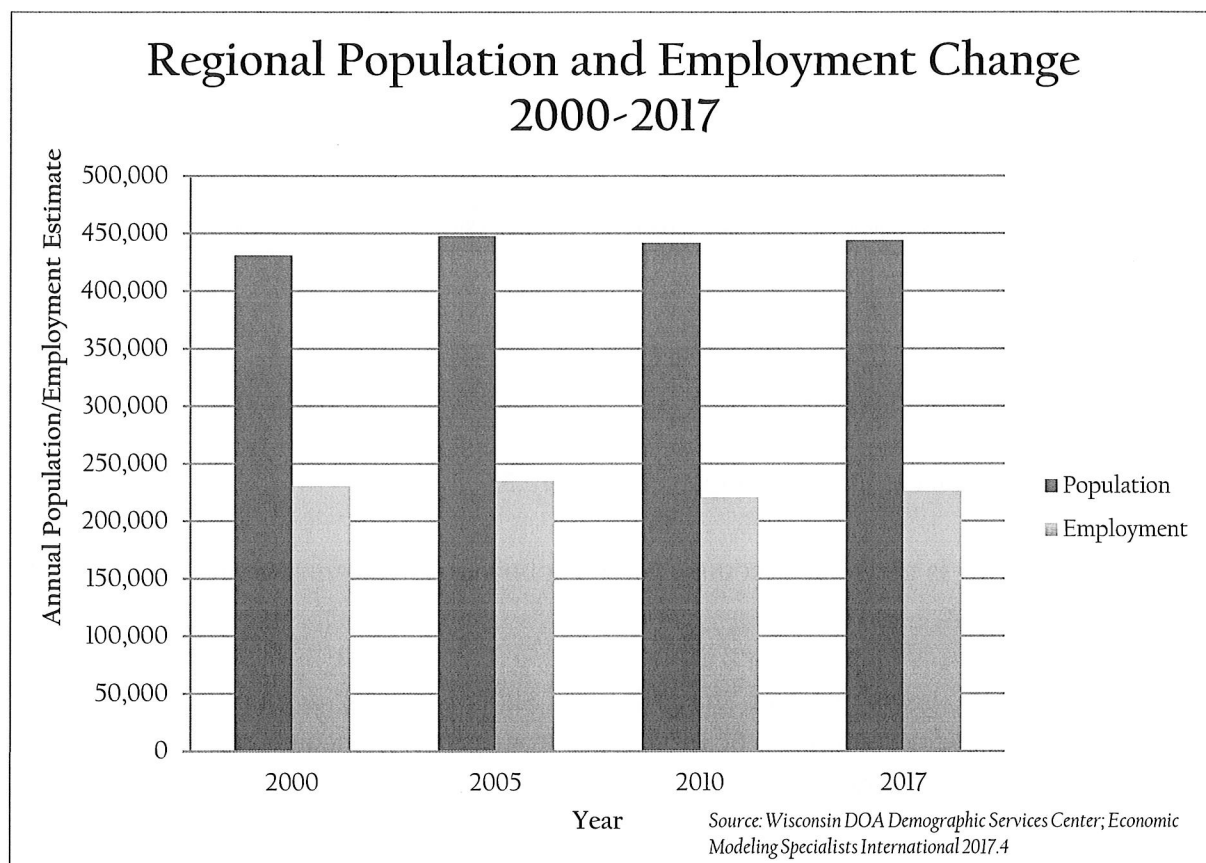
- Provided general assistance to area economic development organizations at the county and local levels.
- Provide general assistance to communities related to economic development.
- Juneau County workforce housing study.
- Prepared economic development chapters as part of comprehensive planning efforts throughout the region, including county, city, village, and town plans.
- Prepared state and federal grant applications on behalf of local communities.
- In partnership with WEDC, provided EMSI reports as requested.
- Updated numerous economic development plans/chapters, including:
Cities of Adams, Antigo, & Tomahawk
Villages of Friendship, Hatley, Marathon City, Spencer, & Stratford
Towns of Cassel, Hazelhurst, Lemonweir, Mosinee, Rib Mountain, Ringle, & Spencer
- Staff works with various economic development and related organizations throughout the region.

In addition, staff provides EDA Grant Administration as required. This consists of completing the annual EDA planning grant application, preparing and submitting EDA reports (semi-annual and year-end), maintaining financial statements, preparing and submitting EDA fund requests, and other related tasks to maintain EDA compliance. This also includes attendance at EDA meetings and other tasks as required for the planning grant.

III. Regional Demographic & Economic Changes

The region's population in 2017 was 444,037, which was about 7.7 percent of the state's population. Over the last seventeen years the population has been stable with a regional population of just under 450,000.

Employment has remained very stable over this period as well. In 2017 there were 226,080 jobs in the region. However, projections indicate that the region will lag behind both the state and nation over the next decade because of the population changes.



In 2016, unemployment in the ten-county region ranged from 6.4% in Forest County to 3.7% in Marathon County. Per Capita Income ranged from \$28,773 in Marathon County to \$22,559 in Forest County. See the table below.

North Central Wisconsin Unemployment Rates & Per Capital Incomes

County	Unemployment Rate, 2016	Per Capita Income, 2016
Adams	6.2%	\$23,668
Forest	6.4%	\$22,559
Juneau	4.6%	\$23,519
Lanlade	5.3%	\$24,772
Lincoln	4.5%	\$27,322
Marathon	3.7%	\$28,773
Oneida	5.0%	\$28,084
Portage	3.9%	\$26,832
Vilas	5.8%	\$27,537
Wood	5.0%	\$27,687
Wisconsin	4.1%	\$29,253
United States	4.9%	\$29,829

Source: DWD 2016 (Not Seasonally Adjusted) & U.S. Census American Community Survey 2012-2016 Five-Year Estimates

Regional Fast Facts*:

- The average total earnings per employee was \$49,757.
- Manufacturing is the largest economic sector followed by government and health care & social assistance.
- Total regional gross product in 2017 was \$19,782,098,122, which is made up of \$12,268,515,147 from earnings, \$6,010,113,228 from property income, and \$1,598,121,040 from taxes on production.

The region's 2016 total exports were \$25,455,790,216, of which over 41 percent was from manufactured goods.

* According to 4Q 2016 & 4Q 2017 EMSI.

IV. Regional Issues

Over the last year there were several economic issues that were identified within the region. These include:

- Regional economy lags behind national economic recovery
- Labor shortages in many fields, including manufacturing and technology
- Lack of broadband access in areas of the region, especially rural areas
- Decline of Paper Manufacturing industry and ripple effect in rail needs throughout the region, especially in the northern counties
- Continued lack of access to National Forest for timber production
- Workforce housing and affordability
- The Region is aging, which impacts future workforce size

V. Regional Strategy

Economic development is pursued by many communities and organizations throughout the region with the goals of expanding the regional economy, increasing employment levels, and increasing tax base. To accomplish this, working with regional businesses is critical. A business operates to produce a profit, but wealth is also distributed to employees, other firms with which it does business, and to the government in the form of taxes and fees, all which in turn, produce wealth for all. Thus, the retention, expansion, creation or attraction of business benefits the entire Region

Although wealth is usually created by the private sector, the public sector (government) has engaged some public-private partnerships. Typically, these ventures assist projects that would otherwise not be developed, because of the lower returns on investment, if pursued by the private sector along.

The federal government has long been involved in enhancing private wealth by such means as providing subsidies, making loan guarantees, or through direct grants of aid. State and local governments are playing an increasing role in economic development as the competition between local governments for new investment has become intense.

A variety of activities can be undertaken to promote economic development. These various activities can be categorized into four basic areas. These are listed below:

1. Provision of Infrastructure and Services: These are typical government functions.
 - Provision of public facilities, such as: sewer and water, roads, police and fire protection, and industrial "parks".
 - Laws/regulations, e.g. zoning ordinances, land development codes, condemnation, taxes, building codes.
 - Assistance/incentive programs, e.g. appointment of a group to support/carry-on an active economic development program, establishment of tax-increment-finance (TIF) districts, approval of business-improvement districts (BID), revolving loan fund, land cost write-down, subsidies, state or federal grants, industrial revenue bonds, venture capital, establishment of "development zones", land assembly and improvements, mortgage holding, interest rate write-down, etc.

2. Planning: These are typical governmental planning functions, at any level (local, county, region, state, and national).
 - Maintaining a data center for economic development related information, such as: financial assistance programs, transportation services and facilities, labor availability, quality-of like factors, public safety, cost/availability of utilities, tax burden, sites and building availability, land-use controls and development costs, demographic characteristics, and much more.
 - Identifying economic development related trends, problems, and opportunities.
 - Conduct specialized studies, such as market analysis, trade-area delineation, and feasibility studies.
 - Plan development, such as community preparedness strategies, and downtown revitalization efforts.
3. Marketing: This function can be carried out by any organization.
 - Advertising and promotion, websites, brochures, publications, direct contact/mail, events, awards, tours, and information packages.
 - Commerce/industry expansion/recruitment, such as call-trips, attendance at trade shows, retention programs.
4. Business Assistance: These are often functions of agencies other than government, such as an economic development corporation or a university small business center.
 - Business start-ups and expansions, grant assistance, business operations/management, job training or re-training, Liaison/ombudsman, e.g. linkage or networking between public/private actors in order to establish lines of communication, and technology transfer, e.g. application of research to a project or process.
 - Counseling, e.g. government procurement, foreign export, business plans, how to start a business, etc., business advocacy, forums/workshops, association membership, lobbying, consensus building, and press releases, and assembling resources, e.g. land/building/equipment, financial commitment, labor, utilities, permits, etc.

